

HOLINESS: DIVINE and HUMAN

1. Introduction The importance of holiness (Heb 12:14)

God is Holy

God alone is holy.

—Holiness, the heart and fountain of God's being—holiness dynamic—
'pure action'/Triune action—*perichoresis*

—not part of His nature, not an attribute but his very being from which all
that he is and does flows.

Holiness and God's glory (Ex 33:18 — 34:7)

2. The Creation—Made for Holiness

The creation to be filled with the glory/holiness of God

Man made in God's image, made to be holy, ie. to partake of and share in the
holiness of God who alone is holy.

3. The Loss of Holiness

The Fall and its effects

The Fall not properly understood apart from God's holiness

4. God Expresses His Holiness and Demand for Human Holiness in History

That process (the Covenant / Salvation History) by which God has continued to
express his holiness in the world and has prepared to put down all unholiness.

Israel called to be holy. The Law, the worship.

5. Jesus and the Cross: True Human Holiness and the Defeat of All that is Unholy

The Holy One became flesh

The Holy One made unholy so that the unholy ones may share his holiness

6. Simultaneously Saints and Sinners, Holy and Profane

The tension of the Christian life: Living with the knowledge that we are holy and
wholly in Christ and giving expression to that in daily living.

Sanctified, being sanctified, will be sanctified

7. The Restoration of Holiness in all the Earth

The new heavens and the new earth where the glory of the Lord (His holiness)
will fill the earth.

Hell — deeds of impenitent exposed by the 'consuming fire' of God's holiness.

STUDY I—THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Introduction

When we think of holiness we usually think in terms of what is right, moral, righteous, just, pure, good, etc. It is right that we do and, in this sense, we all have an interest in holiness. We hate not being holy; we hate being wrong (or being 'found out' to be wrong!!!).

'The great preoccupation of humanity is self—justification'

No doubt behind our drive to be seen to be right is the knowledge of coming judgment and of having to face a holy God. Behind all our rationalising and self—justification etc we know that holiness is essential (Heb 12:14).

Man was made to be holy. If God, in whose image Man is made, is holy, then Man cannot be himself, cannot know fulfilment, apart from that holiness (ie. God's holiness) and without *knowingly* participating in it. Not that our efforts to be holy can bring contentment or happiness but when, by God's sanctifying action, we are made to be holy we will be content. Peterson. says of the Scriptural idea of holiness,

The root meaning of the Hebrew noun 'holiness' (*qodes*) and the adjective 'holy' (*qados*) is separation. The Greek Bible uses *hagios* and some of its derivatives as the equivalent of the Hebrew. This terminology refers to the distinctiveness or otherness of God's character, activities and words. God's holiness is particularly associated with his majesty, sovereignty and awesome power (eg. *Ex. 15:11—12; 19:10—25; Is. 6:1—4*). As the one who is supreme over all, he is transcendent, exalted and different from everything he has made... (David Peterson, *Possessed by God*, p. 17)

God Alone is Holy

We cannot understand holiness apart from the God who alone is holy and who demonstrates what holiness is in his being and actions. Nevertheless, we need to be sure what we mean by the term. We can only understand holiness to the degree that God reveals it to us and this he does but, at the same time, we need to concede that there is that about holiness which will ever remain a mystery because God, in his own being, is beyond comprehension.¹ The reason we can know something of God's holiness is that he actually draws us into that mystery to participate in his being. Our understanding, then, is primarily relational.

Holiness, the heart and fountain of God's being.

Holiness is not a part of God's nature, it is not an attribute, but his very being from which all that he is and does flows. It is that which makes God God; it is his absolute

¹ A valuable read here is Gustaf Aulen: *The Faith of the Christian Church*, Fortress Press. 1967, pp. 102—106.

otherness which separates him from all that he has made and which evokes from the creature worship, awe, fear. God's holiness, his otherness, then, is primarily in his being the self—motivated, all embracing, uninhibited, unceasing, undiminishing, overflowing source of actional love.

HOLINESS IS NOT ABSTRACT OR STATIC

Having said the above, holiness is not an abstract term to which the creature, and Man in particular, cannot relate. Remembering that God alone is holy, his demand that we be holy (Lev 19: 1, Matt 5:48, Heb 12:14) must mean that there is that about holiness which is ours to know and to be or to be in.

When Isaiah was confronted by a vision of the Holy One (Isa 6:1—5) it was his own unholiness that he was made aware of Holiness, then, has an ethical/moral side to it. It is not moralism, however, nor can it, as moral, be separated from the metaphysical or otherness of God, God, at the centre of his being, in his absolute otherness, in his holiness, is absolute purity and total goodness. God is light and in him is no darkness, no shadow.

As the Holy One, God is dynamic, his holiness dynamic. Out of his holiness God is ever expressing himself within his own being — perichoresis. God is *'pure action.'*

HOLINESS AND GOD'S GLORY

(Isa 6:3, Ex 33:18 — 34:7) When God granted Moses' request for a vision of his glory/holiness, he declared his mercy, graciousness, love and faithfulness. That holiness, which is God's alone, fills the earth. As God is holy, so will he have all things to be holy / to share his holiness.

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STUDY 2—MAN: CREATED TO BE HOLY

Man: Created to be Holy

If God has made Man in his own image and for communion with himself, then Man must be holy. God's demand for his people to be holy (Lev 11:44—45; 19:2; 20:26, Heb 12:14) is indicative of this but it is also evident from the great activity of God in history to sanctify his people and to make them holy. What we would see here, however, is not what God has done to restore us to holiness but that we were, from the beginning, made to be holy.

The Creation and Holiness

What we as human beings share with the whole creation is that we are creatures. Holiness is that which is essential to God's being and which separates him from all that he has made; it is that which makes God God. Nothing that is made can, in or of itself, be holy. For any part of the creation to be holy it must share or participate in God's holiness.

Indeed, if God's glory is understood as a revelation of his holiness then even if the creation is not holy — in the specific sense of being sanctified — it all, nevertheless, is filled with and constrained by and even reveals God's holiness (Isa 6:1—5; Ps 19:1—4, Rom 1: 19,20).

This transcendent holiness is the mode of God's immanence for the whole earth is full of his glory! 'That which fills the whole earth is his glory' to it 0 not only the one thing that is capable of filling everything but the thing which actually does so. Holiness is God's hidden glory; glory is God's all present holiness.²

The Holy, the Clean and the Unclean in the Creation

G.J. Wenham³ speaks of Israel's priests' task to discern between the 'holy' and the 'common' and between the 'clean' and the 'unclean' in Leviticus 11—15.

Everything that is not holy is common. Common things divide into two groups, the clean and the unclean. Clean things become holy, when they are sanctified. But unclean objects cannot be sanctified. Clean things can be made unclean, if they are polluted. Finally, holy items may be defiled and become common, even polluted, and therefore unclean.

All God created was good (Gen 1:12,31), all was clean (Mark 7:19, Rom 14:14,20, Tit 1: 15). As we view the creation before the fall, then, there was nothing which was polluted or unclean. For God to 'hallow' the seventh day must intimate something for the creation beyond just being clean. Certainly, for God to relate to Man, clean is not

² J.A. Motyer. *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, (IVP, 1993), p. 77.

³ G.J. Wenham. *The Book of Leviticus, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, Eerdmans. 1979, p. 18f.

sufficient. God is holy and where he dwells is holy (Isa 57:15, Zech 2:13; 8:3). Man must be holy to dwell and to commune with God and to offer true worship (Ps 15; Heb 12:14). God must sanctify both Man and the place where he and Man can dwell and commune one with another and where Man can truly worship.

The Sanctification of Man and the Sanctuary (Eden)

Gen 2:1—17 is instructive here. Eden is the prototype of the eschatological paradise (compare Gen 2:8—14 and Rev 21:22 — 22:5). It is the holy dwelling of God and the place of true worship. Adam (and in him all of humanity) was formed outside of the garden, by creation he was clean but not holy. Being placed in Eden he was sanctified, ie. set apart, for holy living and for the holy purposes, including worship, God had planned for him. It was in the garden that Eve was formed. With her husband she was sanctified or, more likely, shared his sanctification, and their union was sanctified. ‘..the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed’ (Gen 2:25). They were clothed in glory which, as we have seen, was God’s all—present, visible holiness (cf. Ex 34:29f, Matt 17:1—8 and parallels); the very holiness in which they participated was evident to them.⁴ As Adam and Eve were fruitful and multiplied, so Eden would be expanded with them until it filled the whole earth.

Human Holiness Expressed in Relationships and Vocation

The holiness in which Adam and Eve participated meant that they, in their relationships with each other and with God, shared something of God’s *perichoretic* action of giving and receiving honour, love, etc. We are not privy to their expression of adoration or wonder of God — though a hint of their awareness of the ‘otherness’ of God may be found in Gen 3:8—but we could hardly doubt that it was there. Man’s worship would also have been expressed in his fulfilling of the vocation given to him to till the garden and keep it as he multiplied and filled the earth and brought it into subjection. All that he was to do he did not have to do alone but in relationship with his loving, creator God, the creature participating in the holiness of the One who is holy.

⁴ The holiness in which Adam and Eve *participated* was God’s holiness and remained that. It was not a gift in the sense that it was something given to —them or owned by them to do with as they pleased.

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STUDY 3 — THE LOSS OF HOLINESS

As it was in the Beginning

The Fall cannot be understood apart from God's holiness and the knowledge of our participation in it. We cannot understand the fall without knowing what we have fallen from. Any other understanding of God and our being made in his image will mean that our understanding of the magnitude of the fall, if we accept it at all, will only ever be relative to our concept of God and our anthropology.

What we have seen is that God is holy, he alone is essentially holy and Man, made in God's image, participated in that holiness. Holiness was not Man's by creation or by right but by God's sanctifying act. Without knowing God's holiness Man could know neither God as he is nor himself as the image of God. But to know God's holiness (ie, to know God who is holy) Man had to be holy. Man must share in the divine nature or the 'otherness' of that nature would only terrify and destroy him (Ex 20:18—20, Judg 13, Isa 6:5—8). So Man was sanctified and, in his male—female unity, expressed that holiness in his obedience to the word of God concerning his marriage and his vocation and by his worship which (with his marriage and vocation) was his participation and response to the 'hallowing' of the seventh day. Involved in his worship/obedience also was his abstinence from the 'tree of the knowledge of good and evil' (Gen 2:15—17).

As he participated in God's holiness, Man related fully, openly and unashamedly to God, his/her helpmeet and the creation (his was to 'till' and to 'keep' the garden, he named the animals — Gen 2:15,19). Though he had not been tested and proved he was, nevertheless, clean and pure and without any blemish to disturb his own heart, mind or conscience and so he knew himself and related to and within himself freely, ie he was at peace with himself

The Fall and its Effects

Satan, in the guise of one of God's creatures, questioned the woman concerning what they were permitted to eat. Eve clearly knew God's command but was enticed to eat. Adam also knew the command but chose to follow his wife and obey the voice of the serpent. The serpent's promise that they would be 'as God' rather than just 'like God' was, of course, an impossibility. In the hope of being able to discern 'good and evil' for themselves, as God could, they actually became evil. Indeed they traded their holiness for unholiness, their purity for impurity, their shamelessness and freedom for shame and the bondage of sin and guilt. Rather than knowing good from evil, they were now so AMA by evil that they were blinded to its power and deceit (Gen 6:5; 8:21, Jer 17:9, Mark 7:20—23, John 2:23,24). Denying the God of glory, they were stripped of the glory they had shared and with which they had been clothed. Now they were naked and terribly ashamed (Gen 3:7).

Man, who was made to be holy, refused to be what he was made to be. He could not cease to be what he was made to be — in the sense that he was made in God's image and for holiness — but in his refusal to be that he then had to live in constant tension with his own true being (Rom 7:7—25 — *Paul*, however, was aware of the tension and knew he had been delivered from it; those blinded by sin suppress any such sensitivity and rationalise their actions as good and right).

The sin and guilt to which they were now subject intruded into every part of their being. In all of their relationships which once were pure and delightful there was now a fracturing and a perverting. The God who had shared his being with the man and the woman and who related to them face to face as now to be dreaded and hidden from; the One who gave them life was now the enemy (Gen 3:8, Rom 8:5—7, Col 1:21).

That peace and unity and purity of heart and mind and conscience that they knew was now shattered by the guilt and shame and terror that they felt, and these were only heightened by the fact that they had known life without it.

Then there was a new tension between the couple who had known the paradise of Eden and who had tasted something of the *perichoretic* dynamic in their relationships with each other and with God. Rather than take the responsibility for his own actions, the man blamed his wife (Gen 3:12). Finally they were driven out of the garden and forced to toil and labor on an earth which was now cursed because of them (Gen 3:16—19, Rom 8:18—23). The relationship they had known with their fellow creatures was now fractured also (Gen 9:2).

To be cast out of Eden, of course, meant that they were cast out of the sanctuary. They were no longer able to offer the worship which was the highest and deepest action and the truest expression of their being — A was what was most essential for them — and they refused to do so. The necessity to worship, however, compelled them to make their surrogates and substitutes and so, in the perversion of their worship, they confirm and compound the perversion of their own being (Rom 1: 18—32). It must be noted that what Adam did he did for the race. We were in him, participating in his rebellion and so share the guilt and the bondage to sin, even from birth (Ps 51:3—5, Rom 5:12—21, Eph 20).

Conclusion

It is clear that Man's disobedience has had the most profound and terrible affect which has permeated every part of his being. It is by God's restraining grace that we are not as evil as we possibly could be, but the results of our loss — or rejection — of holiness has left us not only helpless but hostile. While we long to be holy we consider the only One who can restore us to holiness to be our enemy and ever seek our own means of attaining holiness. Thus we are bound to live in tension with God and ourselves, always out of sorts and distorted in our thinking and actions and only ever compounding our perverse understanding of the way things really are. Apart from an understanding of God's holiness and what we have fallen from, we are unlikely to accept that we have fallen at all. But God's infinite holiness makes our sin infinitely sinful, and we cannot escape it — not of ourselves anyway.

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STUDY 4—GOD EXPRESSES HIS HOLINESS AND DEMAND FOR HUMAN HOLINESS IN HISTORY

God's Unchanging Plan From Before the Ages

God's intention for the creation was that it should be filled with his glory. Every creature should share his glory and be resplendent with his holiness. The sanctuary, Eden, the dwelling place of God on earth, was to spread until it filled the whole earth. When Man fell and ceased to participate in God's holiness and the creation was cursed because of him, God's plan remained unchanged. If God is the sovereign Lord of history, somehow we must allow that even the Fall is not outside of his (Gods) plan but, with his great work of salvation through history, was necessary for the holy One of Israel to be seen in his fulness. At the same time God remains holy and in no way responsible for evil.

Despite the Fall and Man's subsequent incapacity for good, God did not lower his expectation of humanity that it be holy. For the pure the experience of God's holiness is only one of joyful communion and blessing. Now that Man has refused to be holy, his experience of God's holiness is one of alienation and judgment.

God's Holiness Expressed in Human History

We have seen that God's holiness expresses itself (ie God expresses himself in action and in relationships in an ethical or moral sense. God is good and besides him there is nothing or no one who is good—'no one is good but God alone (Mark 10: 18). God constantly does what is right (Gen 18:25 'Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?').

The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty... (Ex 34:6,7)

Holiness expresses itself in doing good (love) and in opposing evil. At the same time as God is constantly doing good and blessing his creation, he is actively opposed to evil. God cannot allow sin to exist in his creation without coming against it and dealing with it. (Hab 1: 13). The fact that Man had to live in tension with himself following the Fall was not a natural principal or mechanism which operated in the creation. The tension he knew was the very judgment of God personally present and judging (Rom 1: 18,24,26,28).

So through history we see God opposed to evil in his judgments in the Fall (Gen 3:14—19), Cain (Gen 4:8f), the Flood (Gen 6—8), Babel (Gen 11:1—9), Sodom and Gomorrah (18:16f), the nations (Israel and others — Ps 2, Acts 17:2,27) etc.

For God to judge as he has in, say, the Flood or at Sodom and Gomorrah, there must be an understanding of what God has expected and against which Man has rebelled and for which he is being judged. Other—wise God's actions could only be understood as capricious and irrational.

The Covenant God and the Covenants

To understand the action of God who judges in holiness and is holy as he judges we need to understand his covenantal nature. God is a covenant God and always relates through a/the covenant. God's covenant is essentially, 'I have made/chosen you to bless you and I will bless you. As the recipient of my blessing your obligation is to obey me. If you do not obey me, my blessing will be a curse to you.' Covenantal obedience is not an onerous task but a joy and delight.

The Covenant God

We may speak of God within his trinitarian being relating covenantally. The Father, the fons *divinitatus*, blesses the Son in whom he delights with all his being (Ps 2; 40:6—8). The Son delights to do the Father's will. The Spirit delights to do the will of the Father and the Son. The joy of the Son's and the Spirit's obedience flows back in worship and honour of the Father's goodness. In the divine community of love disobedience is inconceivable.

2—The Covenant of Creation (The Eternal Covenant)

In creating, God's desire is to bless. The primary recipient of his blessing is Man who is in his image and made to share in the perichoretic relationships of the Godhead. God's blessing is contained in the hallowing of the Sabbath rest, Man's vocation and his marriage (which is with a view to the eschatological Marriage of the Lamb and his Bride) and in abstinence from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Obedience for man (ie his obligation) must be understood as living consistently with his being in God's image. While abstinence from the tree is no longer applicable — not the least because in Adam we have all partaken of its fruit — the expectation inherent in the creation is still that we should all live in conformity to God's image, ie to be holy. Despite Man's incapacity for good subsequent to the Fall, God has not lowered his expectation of humanity that it be holy (Lev 11:44,45, Matt 5:48).

This Covenant of creation is the basis of all other covenants. God, in his faithfulness to the covenant/s is bringing the creation to a point where the whole 'earth will be filled with the *knowledge* of the glory of the Lord" (Hab 2:14) and where Man will be holy and delight in obedience. The creational covenant is inherent to the creation. Man's problem is not that he does not know it but that he does know it and constantly seeks to suppress the knowledge of it (Rom 1:18f). God's judgments in history, then, are primarily related to this covenant and Man's refusal to accept its obligations.

The various covenants which God has established through history are concerned with fulfilling the creational/eternal covenant. Each covenant had its own conditions, some of which were temporary until that covenant was superseded, but which were equally binding for the time.

3—The Noahic Covenant

Following the judgment of the Flood God renewed the creational covenant with Noah (be fruitful and multiply etc Gen 9:1—17).

4—The Abrahamic Covenant

God revealed his glory to Abraham and promised to bless his descendants and to make a great nation of him. Through him the nations would be blessed. Abraham had to obey God, leave his land and go to a land that he did not know.

5—The Siniatic/Mosaic Covenant

'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage...' (Ex 20:2). The law was the written expression of God's own being.

With this covenant came the Law with its, taboos, cultus, rituals, etc all of which were to impress upon Israel that God was holy and so they should be holy (Leviticus, Deut 27,28). Israel's holiness was essential for it to be a blessing to the nations. As it refused, God (faithfully) dealt with it according to the covenant promises.

6—The Davidic Covenant

God had blessed David and would build him a house and establish the throne of his kingdom forever. In the Davidic covenant God was preparing for the one, the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) and the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16) who would fulfil the covenant obligations and restore the creation to the blessings and obedience of the eternal covenant of creation.

7—The New Covenant

Established in Christ in which the people of God who are united to Christ in his death and resurrection are restored/reconciled to God and receive the Holy Spirit as a foretaste of the inconceivable blessings they will receive as participants in the eternal covenant him, in the divine nature and in the very glory and holiness of God.

Conclusion

God is ever expressing his holiness through history and through the various covenants he has established with the creation and with Man. Where holiness is opposed God necessarily expresses himself in judgment, but judgment itself is a necessary part of blessing; and reconciliation if God is to be faithful to himself and to Man and bring the creation to its ultimate and glorious goal.

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STUDY 5 — JESUS AND THE CROSS: TRUE HUMAN HOLINESS AND THE DEFEAT OF ALL THAT IS UNHOLY

God's Plan to Restore Holiness in the Incarnation

God was not caught out by the Fall. From before he created God knew what would be required For the creation. Jesus was destined to die before the foundation of the world. In the context of exhorting the believers to be holy, Peter wrote,

You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake. (1 Pet 1: 18—20)

Virtually from the moment of the Fall God promised to send one who would defeat evil (Gen 3:14,15). We are reminded of this promise in the call of Abraham (Gen 12:1—3), in Israel's blessing of Judah (Gen 49:8—12), by Moses as the recipient of the Sinaitic covenant (Deut 18:18) and in the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:4—17, esp. 11b—16).

The prophets prophesied concerning the one who would come to establish righteousness and bring forgiveness by bearing sin (classically the Suffering Servant — Isa 42:1-1—4(5—7); 49:1—6; 50:4—9; 52:13—53:12. Also Jer 31:31—34, Ezek 34:11—24; 37:24—28).

Hebrews reminds us that the Law given to Israel, especially its sacrificial cultus, pointed to the one whose blood would be effective (Heb 8—10) .

Jesus: the Holy One Made Man

But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.. (Gal 4:4,5).

..the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God (Luke 1:24—35).

For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weakness, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning (Heb 4:15).

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom 8:3,4).

The Cross: the Holy One Made to be Unholy that the Unholy Ones May be Made Holy

All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned everyone to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

... he was cut off out of the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people.

Yet it was the will of the Lord to bruise him;
when he makes him an offering for sin

by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous;
and he shall bear their iniquities. (Isa 53:6,8, 10,11)

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the
righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21).

Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of
righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men (Rom 5:18, see vv. 12—21).

Conclusion

It is clear that we who have rejected the holy One and the holiness for which we were created and in which we communed with God are now, of ourselves, incapable of any measure of holiness and cut off from the presence of God (Rom 8:5—8). Yet our heavenly Father, who demands that we be holy and whom we cannot see without holiness, out of his great love and grace sends his beloved Son to offer true human holiness and to take into himself and destroy all that is unholy. We are united to and in him and have, in him, fulfilled the law (Rom 8:3,4) and died to sin (Rom 6: 1 —11) and the world (Gal 5:24; 6:14) so that Christ is now 'our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption' (I Cor 1:30).

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STUDY 6 — THE SANCTIFIED PEOPLE OF GOD SIMULTANEOUSLY SAINTS AND SINNERS, HOLY AND PROFANE

Living in the Tension of Sanctification

When the New Testament speaks of the people of God being sanctified, it does so in three tenses. We are told that the people of God *have been* sanctified, *are being* sanctified and will *be* sanctified. There is a tension here as we live in the promise of a sanctification which has been accomplished but see in our lives the fruit of the flesh which seems very much unsanctified.

We Are Sanctified

We saw in our last study that God, the Father, has made Christ 'our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption' (I Cor 1:30). A constant theme of the New Testament is our being 'in him,' ie. 'in Christ' (Eph 1:3—14, John 17:20—26). We know that we who are in Christ have been sanctified, the Father has separated us for his own use (the root meaning of *qados*, *qodes*, *hagios* was separation). This is effected in us by the Holy Spirit — the spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son — who takes all that the Father has done for us in the Son and applies it to our hearts and minds and consciences so that we know the truth of it and are empowered by it — and the Spirit — to live consistently with it (John 16:7—15, Rom 15:16).

.you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor 6: 11)

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old *has* passed away, behold the new *has* come.. (2 Cor 5:17)

For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified (Heb 10: 10, 14)

For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have one origin. (Heb 2:11, cf John 17:14)

He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son (Col 1:13)

Associated with this is the use of the term saints (*hoi hagiois*) for the believers (eg I Cor 1:2, Phil 1:1)

Any understanding of sanctification must flow out of the sanctification which God has completed in Christ. 'In him' we are now holy and blameless (Eph 1:4), 'in him' we are reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:16—21) and 'in him,' through the forgiveness of sins, have access to the very throne of the Father (Heb 10: 14—22).

We Are Being Sanctified

In our experience we know that we are far from perfect, however, and in this sense we understand that we are *being sanctified*. We are not going through a process so that God is able to sanctify us or will sanctify us but, knowing the sanctification in which we stand and motivated by it, we are:

1. repulsed by those things we see in ourselves which contradict what we know to be true (Rom 7:13—25; 1 Cor 9:27; 2 Cor 5:6—10) and
2. strengthened and exhorted to conform our lives to what we know to be true and what, by God's grace, we delight to be (Rom 6; 7:22, Heb 9:14, Phil 3:12—16).

We Will Be Sanctified

It is because we know that we have been sanctified yet fail to live in conformity with that sanctification that we look forward to the eschatological fulfilment when we will *be* finally and fully sanctified. This final fulfilment helps us now as we live in the hope of all that is to be revealed.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, he will do it. (1 Thess 5:23,24)

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only wise God our saviour.. (Jude 24,25)

Conclusion

Despite our constant failure to be holy in, of and by ourselves, God has accepted us as My 'in Christ.' By the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are taught and encouraged and strengthened to desire holiness and to be holy, producing in our lives the fruit of the Spirit which is the outflow of holiness, ie. love, Joy, peace etc (Gal 5:22—23; Rom 14:17). All the time we are excited and motivated by the hope which is set before us of being fully sanctified; when what we have known by faith is realized in every part and fibre of our being and we are finally free from the tug and deceit of sin.

New Creation Teaching Ministry—Monday Night Studies 24th November 1997

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STUDY 7 — THE RESTORATION OF HOLINESS IN ALL THE EARTH

God's Goal to Unite All Things In Christ

God's goal for creation is 'to unite all things in him (ie in Christ), things in heaven and things on earth' (Eph 1: 10). The end will come with the destruction of every authority and power which is opposed to God.

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to every one. (I Cor 15:28, see also Eph 1: 15—23)

It will be then that 'the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea' (Hab 2:14). This will be the fulfilment of that movement which began with Eden and which, despite the revolts of angels and humans, God has been progressively bringing to completion. The final accomplishment of the goal, however, will not be through a process of spiritual evolution where humanity will eventually rise to its 'potential.' Reaching the goal has demanded God to act decisively in human history to put down his enemies and ours and so to reconcile his elect through calling, justification and eventual glorification (Rom 8:30) or washing, sanctification and justification in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of God (I Cor 6:11). Any action towards the fulfilment of the goal has only ever been God's action as he has expressed his holiness.

The Final Destruction of Evil

The primary act in which God defeated evil was in the death of his beloved Son on the cross and his resurrection. In that act where he judged all evil and liberated his people from the power of sin, God effected and secured his eternal plan to unite all things in Christ. Yet there also needs to be a decisive act — not separate from the judgment of the cross — to bring the full effect of that judgment into operation and remove all that is unholy from his creation. So history moves towards that climax where the forces of evil with which the people of God have ever been in conflict — are finally confronted and put down by the Lamb who was slain (2 Thess 2:1—12, Rev 19&20). Prior to this climactic confrontation, Jesus receives his own who are, in turn, glorified to take their part in the final conflict (I Cor 15:51—58; 1 Thess 4:15—17; 1 John 3:2,3; Rev 19:14).

Following the disarming and defeat of the worldly forces of evil there is the judgment where all those whose names were not written in the 'book of life' are assigned to the lake of fire (Matt 25:31—46, Rev 20:11—15). The lake of fire is filled with the flames of God's holiness which consume but do not consume. There is no place for evil in the creation so all that is evil is consumed by the fire (God is a consuming fire — Heb 12:29) yet those who are assigned to the lake of fire are not consumed (cf Ex 3:1—6). In the lake all are judged according to their deeds. Exposed by God's holiness, all the evil they had done — their whole lives — stands before them, active yet passive. Active

in the sense that it in the penetrating light of God's holiness it burns the conscience with despair (repulsion?) for the doing of it and the consequences of it, all at once, overwhelmingly, unbearably, insanely. Yet passive in the sense that there was no continued involvement in it or pleasure that could be derived from it. And it is all the more terrifying because of the awareness that that judgment will never end or diminish.

In the judgment of the cross and of the lake/second death, God's holiness is vindicated (Rom 3:21—26, Isa 66:22—24).

The New Heavens and the New Earth and the Wedding of the Lamb and His Holy Bride

Having put down and removed all evil, God will renew heaven and the earth (Rev 21:1). The creation itself has been anticipating this moment (Rom 8:18—23). With the new heavens and the new earth, God presents the Bride to his Son, the Bride which Christ has, himself, purified (Eph 5:25—27). So we see the goal of history fulfilled and the holy people of God dwelling in all holiness with him (Rev 21:1—22:5). 'He will dwell with them and they shall be his people.' In that place—in the new heaven and the new earth—there will be no evil nor anything that results from evil (Rev 21:4); nothing evil could exist where the glory of God has filled and radiates every atom and molecule of the creation.

In many places we are told that we OR be glorified with Christ. Jesus spoke of the righteous shining like the sun (Matt 13:41—43). Paul tells us that when Christ appears we will also appear with him in glory (Col 3:4, cf I John 3:2) and that our heavenly bodies will differ in glory as one star differs from another (I Cor 15:35—41). This variation in glory, no doubt, refers to the varying rewards of the faithful according to what they have done (Luke 19:12—28; Rom 8:17; 1 Cor 3:10—15; Rev 20:11,12). But all will be holy!

Conclusion

God, who alone is holy yet whose desire and plan was to share the rich wonders of holiness, of holy being in holy relationships, beyond the 'borders' of his own being will bring his creation and his creatures, especially his people whom he made in his own image and with whom the eternal Son has become one, to relate to him in all holiness and purity. There will be nothing in all eternity which will break that relationship in which, by the Spirit, we will be one with the Father and the Son as they (ie the Father and the Son) are one; the Father in the Son and the Son is in the Father and they in us and us in them (John 17:11,20—23). Thus we will all be one with each other because we will be one with the Father and the Son.

In the mean time, it is that reality (known by faith) which draws us on to be holy now.

And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. (I John 3:3)

Holiness is God's hidden glory; glory is God's all—present holiness.